

Are You Committing Assumicide?

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[music]

Mark: Are you committing assumicide?

[chuckle]

Jill: Good question.

Mark: Yep.

Jill: Most of us are.

Mark: We are.

Jill: To some extent. We can't take credit for the word assumicide. We didn't create it. Our friends Jeff and Beth McCord, they are the authors of *Becoming Us*. An excellent book.

Mark: Yep.

Jill: But they talk about assumicide. And man, as we are talking about thinking, assumptions are thinking.

Mark: Yes and assumptions can get the best of us.

Jill: They really can. And they can be big assumptions that we've talked about how our thinking is fueled by any lenses that we look through. So assumptions can be based upon a lens that we're looking through or they can just be innocent, faulty thinking in everyday marriage stuff.

Mark: Yep.

Jill: We just dealt with this not too long ago. We had a family meal and when our family gathers together for holiday meals, we often have these really yummy Beef House rolls.

Mark: In our family, the turkey or the ham doesn't matter. It's the Beef House rolls.

Jill: That's right, exactly.

[chuckle]

Jill: And we buy them frozen and so they come in these packages of six, frozen. They're already in

the pans that they're gonna cook in. And you put them in the refrigerator overnight and they're gonna rise a little bit. But then you take them out about four hours before the meal, so that they rise the rest of the way and then they're big and they are yummy yeast rolls.

Mark: Yes, they are.

Jill: We are gluten-free most of the year, except at the holidays.

Mark: Right.

Jill: We have Beef House rolls.

Mark: Right.

Jill: So anyway, we got up that morning and Mark thought he was being helpful.

Mark: Right. So what's nice is Jill has gotten to where she writes down her list of things that she wants to accomplish, that helps me partner with her. I saw rolls at the top of the list so I went out to the fridge and set them out and got them all ready.

Jill: That was so kind of him.

Mark: It was.

Jill: Except they were four hours too early. [chuckle]

Mark: It was. I had no idea.

[chuckle]

Jill: So anyway, I came down and saw the rolls sitting out and I thought, "Oh my gosh. We can't have the rolls out now. They'll get ready four hours too early before we need to cook them and eat them hot. So anyway.

Mark: Yeah.

Jill: Even though it was a silly, little assumption, okay, it was a silly, little assumption, you made an assumption that that needed to be done first thing, he went and did it, which was great. There were 12 of these packages of rolls or something. It was a lot. So that assumption was actually incorrect. And one of the things that we've really learned about a way to stop assumptions, is to ask your thoughts.

Mark: Yeah.

Jill: To actually ask your thoughts. So what could have saved him energy and me energy and him putting them all back out in the refrigerator in the garage was just to say, "Hey I see rolls are on the list. Do you want me to put the rolls in?"

Mark: Yeah.

Jill: And I could have quickly said, "Oh no, we're not gonna bring the rolls in the house until... We have a refrigerator in our garage. We're not gonna bring them in the house until noon, because that's about four hours before dinner.

Mark: So this is a great place where an argument could have ignited. Because then I could've jumped to, "Well, I was just trying to be helpful. And if you wanted them brought out at a certain time, you should have written that on the page. It's all your fault."

Jill: Yup. Man, that's when we take the bait.

Mark: Yeah. And if you go back to one of our earlier teachings, we said to you, "Don't take the bait."

Jill: Exactly. And so this is also a place where we have to manage our thinking. Alright. I tried really hard... In fact, I think my exact words were, "Honey, thank you so much for bringing the rolls in. That was so kind of you to think about that."

Mark: Yeah.

Jill: "However, they're four hours too early and that's not gonna work." [chuckle]

Mark: Right. Well and I noticed that and I think I said, "You handled that really well." Yeah.

[chuckle]

Jill: But that's what often happens, is we make assumptions and maybe even try to help with an assumption. But sometimes we make other assumptions that we don't even realize we do. Now, let me give you a definition of assumption. "Assumptions possess the ability to kill and destroy relationships, friendships and marriages." Whoa.

Mark: Yeah, that's strong.

Jill: That's strong.

Mark: But that's true.

Jill: We've been reading in God's Word. In some of our previous videos, we talked about how it brings about peace... Oh wait a minute.

Mark: Oh, yeah.

Jill: It's in Ephesians 8. You've got it open right there.

Mark: Romans 8.

Jill: Romans 8.

Mark: Yeah, Ephesians wouldn't have 8.

[chuckle]

Mark: So "Letting your sinful nature control your mind, leads to death. But letting the spirit control your mind, leads to life and peace."

Jill: Yes. And that's what we want. Is life and peace.

Mark: Yeah.

Jill: So "Assumptions possess the ability to kill and destroy relationships, friendships and marriages. Assumptions happen when somebody believes a thought, even if it's not factual or true. Then they react and respond emotionally based upon that thought. Which in turn can even cause damage to the person on the receiving end." And usually negative assumptions come from our own personal fears or they come from our own personal experiences, our past experiences. They can come from our home of origin. They can come from maybe even the dynamics in our relationship previously.

Jill: It doesn't always have to go way, way back, it can go back to us. But bottom line, assumptions are a recipe for interpersonal conflict and personal struggles. And so we have got to learn to take our thoughts captive. As it relates to assumptions, what are you assuming about your spouse, about a circumstance, a situation? And is that assumption really accurate? So, let's think about this. Here are some things that we can assume. We can assume that we know what our spouse is thinking when there's no way you know what your spouse is thinking [chuckle] unless your spouse has told you what they're thinking, and then you're not assuming it. So we have to be careful, because we can assume what our spouse is thinking. And then we are responding based upon what we think they're thinking, and there is no way that my mind can know what your mind has going on in it.

Mark: No way. I many times don't even know what I'm thinking.

[laughter]

Jill: That's so true for all of us.

Mark: Yeah. Secondly, assuming we know what our spouse is feeling.

Jill: Yeah.

Mark: And then, so often, we impose our own feelings upon our spouse. And that's really unfair, and it won't play out well, and it won't be right.

Jill: Right. We were just working with a couple recently and they were sitting in our living room and we were talking to them. This was like our fourth or fifth time to meet with them. And I saw her catch herself and make an assumption about his feelings. And then she pulled back and she said, "Actually, let me just speak for myself." And man.

Mark: I remember that, yeah.

Jill: I could have just jumped, I mean I affirmed her, but I could've jumped up and done a cheer at that moment, because that was such a place of growth. She caught herself making an assumption and then she backed it up and said, "Actually, let me just share with you what I'm feeling. I won't assume that I know what you are thinking or feeling." That's what we're looking for in changing our thoughts, changing our mind, and therefore changing our marriage. And man, some of their early conversations had been really difficult, but in that moment, she changed her outcome.

Mark: Right.

Jill: She literally changed her outcome, because she changed her thinking, which then informed her feelings, which informed her actions, which changed that outcome and those results. That's what we're looking for.

Mark: Yeah. Next is assuming our spouse is out to get us, like we make them out to be our enemy.

Jill: And sometimes that can come from previous relationships, it can come from our home of origin. It honestly can even come from the past in our own relationship.

Mark: Right.

Jill: I think about us, we refer to ourselves as Mark and Jill 2.0. Ever since we had our crisis where we got serious about taking our thoughts captive, all of these things that we're talking about and changes we've made that we're trying to help you to make as well. And so honestly, there were probably times in the past I was more like an enemy, because of my critical spirit, and that kind of a thing. But you also had to begin to let me become different.

Mark: Right.

Jill: We sometimes hold our spouse hostage to past behavior, and that is an assumption in and of itself.

Mark: Yeah, it is.

Jill: We assume that they're going to do the same thing again. This is when we have to rebuild trust, because rebuilding trust is breaking those assumptions, because it has changed behavior over time. So maybe they've not rebuilt the trust, but you have to still believe the best in them, and not make assumptions that they're gonna do the same thing again.

Mark: Right, right.

Jill: You gotta let 2.0 begin to take place.

Mark: Yeah. Yeah. Another assumption is that we assume our spouse will betray us, and that can flow from past. It can flow from our current relationships, it's like what you just said that maybe there's some acts of betrayal between you and your spouse. And we've gotta let our spouse grow and change, and we've gotta let them up from the behaviors in the past.

Jill: Well, and oftentimes, maybe if we've experienced betrayal in our past, our tendency is to think, "Well, my spouse is gonna be no different."

Mark: Right. Definitely.

Jill: My dad left, my first husband left, so therefore I'm sure that he's gonna leave." Okay.

Mark: Yeah, you're just waiting on when that'll happen.

Jill: Right, and that is an assumption. And that assumption becomes a lens that we look at our spouse through. And so, you can look at it through, "My dad betrayed me," maybe or, "My previous spouse betrayed me, they were unfaithful. You're gonna be unfaithful." And then that spouse actually begins to look for evidence of unfaithfulness when there really isn't even any reason for that to be there, but based upon their assumptions, the lens that they're looking at life through, that's the way that they... That's the fear that they actually are just sure is gonna happen.

Mark: Yeah.

Jill: And then sometimes we assume that our way of doing things is the right way and our spouse's way of doing things is the wrong way. So it all works together with differences and all of that, but man, we make a lot of assumptions, because the way we do things works well for us. And so that's why we think it's the right way. But that is a wrong assumption.

Mark: Right.

Jill: There are lots of right ways to do things.

Mark: And honestly, that assumption is fueled by pride.

Jill: It is.

Mark: And that pride is nasty.

Jill: And so, again, we're talking about our thinking. So we wanna move from assuming that our thinking is recognizing the assumptions in our thinking, recognizing the pride in our thinking, and then changing it in our thinking before it ever becomes a feeling, before it ever becomes an action, before it ever produces results, we wanna grab it. The Bible says, "It's taking the thoughts captive." We're gonna grab it while they're still in the thinking stage, so that we are recognizing that they exist. One time I had... We asked somebody, "Are you making inferences about your differences?"

Mark: Yeah, yeah.

Jill: And it's a good... "Are you inferring that my way is the right way, and your way is the wrong way? Are you inferring that your way is the right way, and my way is the wrong way?" And we often do that, and an inference is even an assumption when you're inferring things.

Mark: Well, when you're hinting, you're speculating, you're guessing, none of it is effective or

healthy, and assumptions lead us down the wrong path, and so we wanna stop the assumptions, and so how do we do that?

Jill: Right, and the best way to do that is ask your thoughts. Ask your thoughts. So we've already given you an example of just a really practical one, Mark asking about, "Hey, I see rolls are on here, would you like for me to pull them out?" Where I could have said, "Oh, no, let's wait, we don't wanna do that till noon." But let's say it's something, I don't know, a little deeper than that, "Honey, I sense that you are angry, am I sensing that correctly?" Okay, that's asking your thoughts instead of assuming that they're angry, you're actually asking if they're angry.

Mark: Yeah, I think of a friend of ours, whose husband had lost his job, and she every day, multiple times a day would just kept saying, "Have you sent out resumes? Have you sent out resumes? Have you sent out resumes?" And her assumption was really that he had no interest, that he was just idle and sitting around sulking. And we really helped her see that instead of moving towards assumption, she could ask her thoughts and maybe ask, "I sense that you're afraid to send out a resume, is that true?" Or, "I sense that you're embarrassed and feeling rejected, is that true?" So it's that compassion that can come alongside of our spouses rather than the...

Jill: Accusations.

Mark: I started to say arrogance of accusation. Yeah.

Jill: Right, so just think about places where you have thoughts, and you normally would nurture those thoughts, whether they're good or not, you wouldn't take them captive, you would fuel the frenzy. Okay, you would keep that frenzy going, and that would then cause you to feel a certain way, cause you to act a certain way, produce results that are less than ideal, especially if those were originally negative thoughts. And so if you can capture those thoughts and actually ask your spouse about them like, "Is this correct, is this something that you're thinking about that you're struggling with? Are you feeling a certain way?"

Jill: That then helps you to actually put your thoughts in the right place. Now, maybe your spouse is like, "Yes, I'm angry." Okay. Then you have a new thought to deal with, "My spouse is angry, how am I gonna think about that? How am I gonna think about that, am I gonna think about that that is now rejection?" Because then I'm gonna start feeling afraid, and then I'm gonna withdraw, and then we're gonna be further apart. Or am I gonna say, "Okay, my spouse is angry maybe I need to ask another question, are you angry specifically at me?" Is there something that has happened there? Now, we're talking about conflict. Okay, so assume that they said, "Yes, I'm angry about something." So now we're in conflict, now we go to, "What do I need to be thinking about conflict?" Conflict is...

Mark: That it's normal, it's healthy.

Jill: It can deepen intimacy if it's handled well.

Mark: And it's growth trying to happen.

Jill: Right. Okay, so what I hear is that you are struggling with this. I'm gonna feel like conflict is okay. That's gonna inform my feelings that this is normal, and I can engage this and not take it

personal, which means it's going to maybe help me to respond rather than react in my actions, and we're going to have a different outcome in the conversation that we're gonna have, and it all goes back to feelings. So this is Mark and Jill Savage with a reminder that if you will change your mind, specifically today about assumptions, you can change your marriage.

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